

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02
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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0468

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS PRETORIA 0888

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: INTERNAL AGREEMENT IS JUST FIRST STEP

REF: PRETORIA 0880

1. FEBRUARY 16 MORNING NEWS ACCOUNTS INDICATE THAT AGREEMENT
REACHED LAST NIGHT BY INTERNAL RHODESIAN LEADERS WAS JUST
ON THE EIGHT CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES AND IS NOT BEING
CONSIDERED BY THE PRINCIPAL PARTICIPANTS AS A FINAL SETTLEMENT.
CONTRARY TO PRELIMINARY ACCOUNTS (REFTEL) NO FORMAL AGREEMENT
WAS SIGNED. ALTHOUGH REPORTS INDICATE THEY WERE ALL OBVIOUSLY
PLEASED WITH THE PROGRESS, EACH OF THE LEADERS WAS CAUTIOUS
IN HIS REMARKS ABOUT THE NEXT STEPS. SMITH IS QUOTED AS SAYING
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"WE ARE CLOSER TO A SETTLEMENT THAN I HAD DREAMED." WHEN ASKED IF AN
AGREEMENT HAD BEEN SIGNED, SMITH REPLIED, " WHAT DOES IT MATTER?
WE ARE DEALING WITH MEN OF HONOR." MUZOREWA IS REPORTED TO HAVE
REPLIED TO QUESTIONS THAT " THIS WHOLE CROWD IS VERY HAPPY (AND)
WE HAVE OVERCOME ON OF THE HURDLES THAT HAVE BEEN HOLDING US BACK."
BOTH CHIRAU AND GABELLAH, REPRESENTING SITHOLE, TOLD
REPORTERS THAT A DCISION ON AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WAS VERY

CLOSE, MAYBE WITHIN DAYS. IT WAS, HOWEVER, CLEAR THAT AGREEMENTS ON THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENT AND THE SECURITY FORCES WERE YET TO BE REACHED. SMITH SAID THAT " THERE ARE STILL A FEW SMALL PROBLEMS TO OVERCOME." ONE NEWS ACCOUNT SAY THAT CONFERENCE SOURCES INDICATE THAT A FORMAL SIGNING IS NOT LIKELY UNTIL THE COMPOSITION AND FUNCTION OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT IS AGREED UPON.

2. THE COMPROMISE ON THE WHITE PARLIAMENTARY SEATS THAT LET TO THIS INITIAL AGREEMENT IS REPORTED TO BE TWENTY SEATS ELECTED BY A WHITE VOTERS ROLL AND EIGHT SEATS TO BE ELECTED BY THE COMMON ROLL. THE EIGHT SEATS, HOWEVER, WILL BE CHOSEN FROM A SLATE OF SIXTEEN CANDIDATES NOMINATED BY THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT, ALL OF WHOM ARE RHODESIAN FRONT MEMBERS.

3. REACTION IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS BEEN UNIVERSALLY FAVORABLE. AS REPORTED REFTEL, P.M. VORSTER WELCOMED THE MOVE AS A CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA IS QUOTED AS SAYING " WE ARE WATCHING THE DEVELOPMENTS WITH GREAT INTEREST." OPPOSITION LEADER COLIN EGLIN IS REPORTED TO HAVE CALLED IT A STEP TOWARD " NORMALIZATION" IN RHODEISA. EGLIN WELCOMED IT AND ADDED HIS HOPE THAT RHODESIANS WOULD BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO SETTLE THE ISSUE PEACEFULLY. NEW REPUBLIC PARTY LEADER, VAUSE RAW, STATED THAT " THIS IS THE BEST NEWS THAT HAS REACHED US IN A LONG TIME." PRELIMINARY EDITORIAL REACTION FROM BOTH ENGLISH AND AFRIKAANS LANGUAGE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAPERS SHOWS A GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE AGREEMENT.

4. EMBASSY COMMENTS WILL FOLLOW SEPTTEL.
NELSON

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